

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
MAPLE-STEELE JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
PAGE AUDITORIUM
PAGE, NORTH DAKOTA
JUNE 25, 2014

The Maple-Steele Joint Water Resource District met on Wednesday, June 25, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. at the Page Auditorium, Page, North Dakota.

Present were Jurgen Suhr, Chairman; Rodger Olson and Gerald Melvin, Maple River Water Resource District; Josh Ihry, Tor Bergstrom and Greg Thykeson, Steele County Water Resource District; Carol Harbeke Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer; Brittany C. Moen, Administrative Assistant; Sean Fredricks, Attorney for the Board; Mike Opat, Engineer for the Board; and those whose names appear on the attached roster.

Chairman Suhr called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

Minutes

It was moved by Manager Bergstrom, seconded by Manager Melvin and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the February 14, April 2, May 6 and June 11, 2014, meetings, as presented.

Upper Maple River Dam – assessment hearing

Mike Opat informed those present the vote on the Upper Maple River Dam passed and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to allow landowners the opportunity to protest specific assessments. He gave a PowerPoint presentation to review the voting results, project details, project benefits, costs, funding and assessments.

Mr. Opat said that voting for the project closed on May 2, 2014, and 80.3% of the ballots returned voted in favor of the project. He explained that in addition to the assessment votes, landowners of property required for the project are allowed a “protest” vote based on the assessed value of the property per county tax rolls.

Mr. Opat explained that the Corps of Engineers’ Section 404 Permit and the North Dakota Department of Health Section 401 Permit have both been granted for the project. The Office of the State Engineer is currently in the process of reviewing the permit application, which was submitted in the fall of 2013. Mr. Opat reviewed a potential schedule for bidding, awarding the contract and beginning construction and said progress has started on preparing final plans and specifications and working on right-of-way acquisition.

Mr. Opat presented a map of the Upper Maple River Dam, showing the embankment, tie off levee and the elevations of the top of the dam and spillways. He explained that the proposed project is considered a dry dam, meaning there are no gates and the flow will be controlled by the pipe through the dam. He then showed conceptual renderings of the 65' concrete spillway and the tie-off levee. The Upper Maple River Dam will provide 9 times the storage of the existing Sussex Dam upstream.

Mr. Opat reviewed impacts to nearby roads, results of the Maple River Watershed Comprehensive Detention Plan and potential downstream benefits from the project.

The total project cost is estimated at \$8 million. The Board anticipates 60% cost-share from the North Dakota State Water Commission, 65% cost-share on local project costs from the Red River Joint Water Resource District and the Cass County Flood Sales Tax Committee has approved funding 50% of the remaining local costs. There is potential for additional cost-share through the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Diversion Authority.

Mr. Opat explained that direct assessments were voted on and will be paid by the landowners. Indirect assessments to Drains #46 and #56 were voted on and will be paid by the Maple River Water Resource District.

The meeting was then opened up for questions from the public.

Bruce Anderson asked where the material would be taken from to build the dam. Mr. Opat demonstrated the areas that would be mined for the material needed for the project.

William Brudvik asked what entity will be responsible for road closures in high water events. Manager Olson explained that an *Operation and Maintenance Manual* will be developed for the project, which would outline that task. He said the Cass County Joint Water Resource District entered into an agreement with Highland Township to take care of road closures for the Maple River Dam.

Gary Carlson commented that he believed the assessments were higher than the benefit on Drain #56 properties.

Mark Johnson said there is no benefit on land he owns next to the river in the SW 1/4 of Section 11 in Hill Township because that land is not farmed.

Sharon Buhr distributed a letter to the Board regarding assessments on her property for the Board's consideration. A letter submitted by another property owner was also reviewed by the Board.

Additional minutes relating to assessment district are attached hereto.

The Board discussed land acquisition and easements needed for the project. Mr. Opat will send letters with *Purchase Agreements* to landowners for property required for the project.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, the meeting adjourned without objection.

APPROVED:

Jurgen Suhr
Chairman

ATTEST:

Carol Harbeke Lewis
Secretary-Treasurer